

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:395
ANSWERED ON:19.11.2007
PUBLIC TELEPHONES IN VILLAGES
Reddy Shri Karunakara G.

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to provide huge funds to set up public telephones in a large number of villages in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the amount earmarked for this purpose; and
- (c) the details of the villages in the country especially in Karnataka where this telephony facility would be provided under the above plan?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD)

(a) to (c) As on 30th September, 2007, an amount of rupees 88.58 crore has been disbursed from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) as subsidy support for provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs). USOF has entered into an agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) for provision of VPTs in remaining 66, 822 unconnected village in the country. This excludes villages having population less than 100, lying in thick forest areas, naxalite infested areas etc. As on 30th September 2007, out of 66, 822 unconnected eligible villages, 50, 520 villages have been provided with VPTs facility. These 66,822 eligible villages were identified on the basis of 1991` census. As per the agreement with BSNL, no village has been awarded in Karnataka for provision of VPTs as all the eligible villages have already been provided with VPTs prior to the agreement . However, based on census 2001, Government is reviewing the eligible villages for provision of VPTs in Karnataka. All such villages, found eligible after review, will be provided with VPT facility with subsidy support from USOF.